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Forest Service NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PUBLIC INPUT SOUGHT ON NEW FOREST PLANNING RULES

WASHINGTON, April 2--The U.S. Forest Service is inviting the public to comment on new federal regulations being developed for implementing and changing official forest plans for individual national forests. The Portland meeting is scheduled for April 8 at the World Trade Center, 25 S.W. Salmon, Mezzanine Level, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

"With more than a decade of experience developing and using these highly detailed plans, we found we needed to streamline the process and make it easier to understand. This is an effort to do that," said Forest Service Chief F. Dale Robertson.

Forest plans describe resource management direction for each of the 123 forest units in the National Forest System, and are required by the National Forest Management Act of 1976. More than one million persons participated nationwide in the development of the first forest plans.

Last year the Forest Service conducted an extensive critique of the forest planning process, which included public hearings and consideration of hundreds of comments from the public. The proposed new regulations respond to recommendations developed from that critique.

Robertson also invited members of the public to attend one of four meetings sponsored by the Forest Service at which agency personnel will describe the proposed new rules, answer questions from the public and receive unofficial comments.

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PUBLIC INPUT - CONTINUED

An Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking describing this regulatory proposal was published Feb. 15 in the Federal Register. Copies of the Federal Register notice are available from the Land Management Planning Staff, Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, P.O. Box 96090, Washington, D.C. 20090-6090; telephone (202) 447-5933. Comments should to be sent by May 16 to F. Dale Robertson, Chief, Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, P.O. Box 96090, Washington, D.C. 20090-6090.

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